

38. If you were asked to express an opinion, what would you say?—I have already stated that I think the officers are not taking quite the same interest in their work as formerly. The younger members do not take the same interest as we did years ago.

39. An amendment to Schedule C has been submitted this morning by the institute whereby the salary of the Locomotive Foreman, Dunedin, has been altered from £400 to £355, the salary of the Traffic Clerk, Christchurch, from £300 to £355, the salary of the Storekeeper at Addington has been altered from £255 to £345, and the salary of the Car and Wagon Inspector, Dunedin, from £255 to £300?—Yes.

40. Can you tell the Committee how the Officers' Institute came to put in this schedule figures which they are now desirous of altering? You will understand that, without an explanation being made as to the reasons for those changes, the Committee may form a wrong conclusion?—I think I can explain that. Those items that were altered were put in contrary to the statement at the top of the schedule. The schedule says, "Compiled from D.-3 return for 1910." Those alterations took place subsequent to the issue of D.-3, 1910, and, although the institute was aware of the alterations, they do not agree with the heading at the top—that is, with D.-3, 1910.

41. And as the Committee has decided to deal with nothing later than D.-3, 1910, it was necessary to make those alterations?—Yes, to make them consistent with the heading.

42. *Mr. Arnold.*] I understand there is a regulation which invites you to make suggestions?—Yes, there is a regulation.

43. And it was in consequence of that regulation that you made the suggestion that you took credit for?—I was not taking any credit for it.

44. It was in consequence of that regulation that you did make the suggestion?—Yes, it would be in consequence of that.

45. Was that suggestion made in writing?—No, verbally.

46. Has your suggestion been recognized in any way?—No, not that I am aware of.

47. Not even by a letter to yourself?—No. I believe the suggestion was favourably received by those I mentioned it to, but further than that I have not received any intimation.

48. Now, can you tell me whether it is customary for the Department to recognize services so rendered, either by a bonus or a letter recognizing that the suggestion did come forward, which sometimes carries more value to the officer than a bonus?—Of course, they do occasionally. I have known cases where the Department has given a bonus, but very few.

49. In your opinion, are the officers sufficiently encouraged to make suggestions?—Of course, I do not know of any cases where they have been discouraged.

50. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] Mr. Ross asked you if there was not an evident desire on the part of the younger officers to break away and join in with the Second Division, and I think you said that you were not aware of that, but there was not the sympathy existing that ought to exist?—I said that the younger officers of the present day did not take the interest that the younger officers formerly did.

51. Has not that idea been advocated in your official organ, that the officers of the institute should amalgamate with the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants?—No, sir.

52. Is it not a fact that the Officers' Institute has articles or letters appearing in its paper advocating that?—There may have been letters, but only from a small percentage of officers. I do not think the inclination of the officers generally is to amalgamate with the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

53. Do you think the institute should encourage suggestions of that character?—No; I think the institute should stand by itself.

54. *The Chairman.*] You were asked by the Hon. Mr. Millar if a Stationmaster could take charge of the Palmerston North Post-office. When you were referring to Stationmasters were you not referring to the rank and file of the Stationmasters—the bulk of the service?—Yes, that is what I had in view.

55. You had not in view a position occupied by a Postmaster who was drawing £475 a year?—No, I did not go as high as that.

56. Well, that is the salary drawn by the Postmaster at Palmerston North?—Yes.

57. What grade Railway officer would be called upon to take up such duties as those at £475?—You mean to say, if they were combined duties?

58. Well, if they were combined duties, or an officer in a similar grade was taken out of the First Division of the Railway service and put into the Palmerston Post-office. If he could do the work, what grade of the Railway service would he be taken out of, judging of the grades by the salaries paid?—I should say, either the £355 or £400 grade—not beyond that certainly.

59. What class of station has a Stationmaster in that grade—what town, for instance?—Wellington is a £400 grade, also Dunedin, Christchurch, and Lyttelton. Those are the only four Stationmasters in that grade.

60. Then, to fill that position and grade of pay a man from a much higher position in the Railway would be taken?—Yes. We have not a Stationmaster of the same grade carrying the same money as that in our service.

61. Then, a man getting that higher rate of pay in the Railway service would be still more competent than the ordinary Stationmaster to fill that position in the Post-office at Palmerston North?—Yes.